



AMETHYST

Princess of Gemworld™

11
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ROMEO
CARLS

1 9 3 5
50 DC
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FANS CHOOSE DC COMICS!

The Comics Buyer's Guide recently polled comic book fans around the world about their favorite books and writers. With more than 5900 respondents, it was the largest such survey in comic book history. The results were surprising.

► Favorite cover:
(*New Teen Titans** #1)

► Favorite stories:
("The Judas Contract" in *Tales of The Teen Titans** #42-4, Annual #3
"Who Is Donna Troy?" in *The New Teen Titans* #38
"The Anatomy Lesson" in *Swamp Thing** #21)

► Favorite direct-only book:
(*The New Teen Titans*)

► Two of three favorite books:
(*The New Teen Titans* and *Swamp Thing*)

► Two of three favorite writers:
(Alan Moore and Marv Wolfman)

► Four of nine favorite characters:
(Ambush Bug*, Batman*, Nightwing*, and Swamp Thing)

When informed of the results of the poll, DC Vice President-Executive Editor Dick Giordano said, "We're working to make our books the best. It's gratifying to know the fans recognize and appreciate that. We thank them."



Dick Giordano



Batman



DC Comics. 50 years old and still the newest.

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A SUN RETURNS TO ITS HEAVENS,
WHAT WAS A LONG, DARK NIGHT
NOW GLARES WITH BRIGHT
PROMISE OF A NEW DAY.

AMETHYST

PRINCESS
OF GEMWORLD

LADY TURQUOISE AND
PRINCE TOPAZ GREET
THE SUDDEN DAWN WITH
RELIEF. AND YET--

THE SUN, MY
PRINCESS AMETHYST,
IS AS MUCH YOUR
OBEDIENT SUBJECT
AS WE!

I'VE NEVER ASKED
ANYONE FOR OBEDIENCE,
TOPAZ. I ONLY WANTED
WHAT I GAVE--LOVE.

YOU HAVE MY
LOVE, PRINCESS,
BUT--

-- OUR LOVE. YOU
HAVE MINE AS
WELL, AMETHYST.

SURELY
YOU... KNOW
THAT.

YES, THE LOVE
OF OBEDIENT
SUBJECTS.

...NOT QUITE
WHAT I HAD IN
MIND--OR
HEART.

SACRIFICE!

GARY COHN * ERNIE COLÓN * KARL KESEL * AGUSTIN MAS * CARL GAFFORD * KAREN BERGER
PLOT DIALOGUE & PENCILS INKS LETTERER COLORIST EDITOR

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AMETHYST...
PLEASE
UNDERSTAND.

FOR ALL YOUR
APPEARANCE ON
THIS WORLD, YOU
ARE A CHILD OF
THIRTEEN ON
YOURS--AND NOT
A WOMAN. NOR
ARE YOU OF
THIS WORLD.

NO, I'M NOT OF THIS WORLD,
THIS WORLD OF MAGIC AND
CRUELTY--OF LIES, DECEIT,
AND BROKEN PROMISES.

THIS WORLD OF
RUTHLESS ENEMIES
AND FALSE
FRIENDS.

PRINCESS, DON'T--

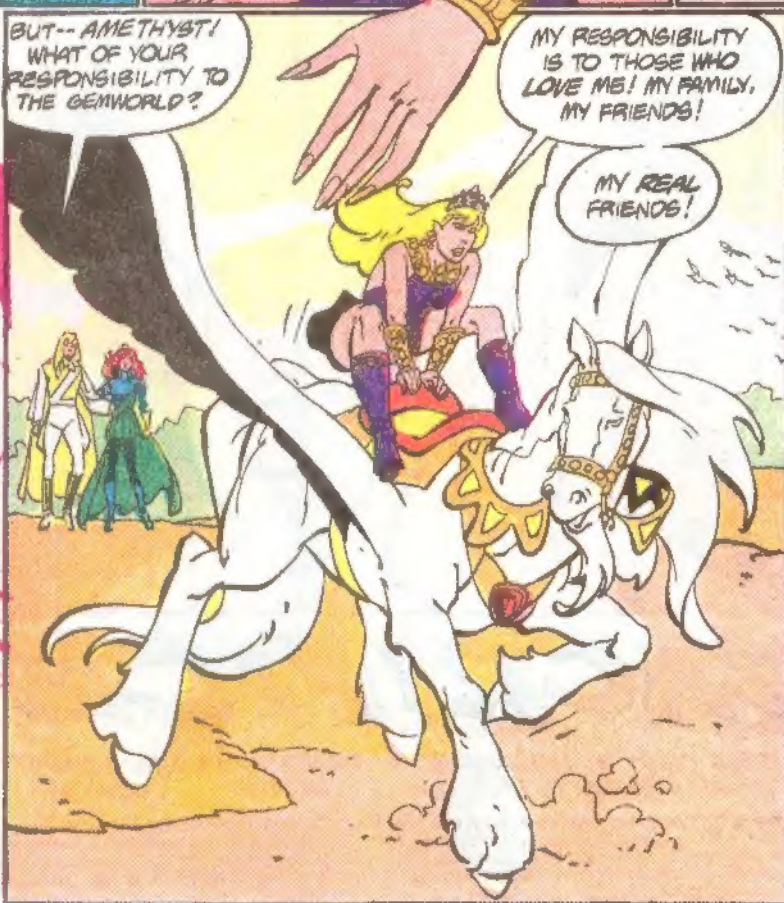
YOU'RE RIGHT,
PRINCE TOPAZ...
I'M NOT OF THIS
WORLD AND I'M
GLAD BECAUSE
I DON'T WANT
TO BE!

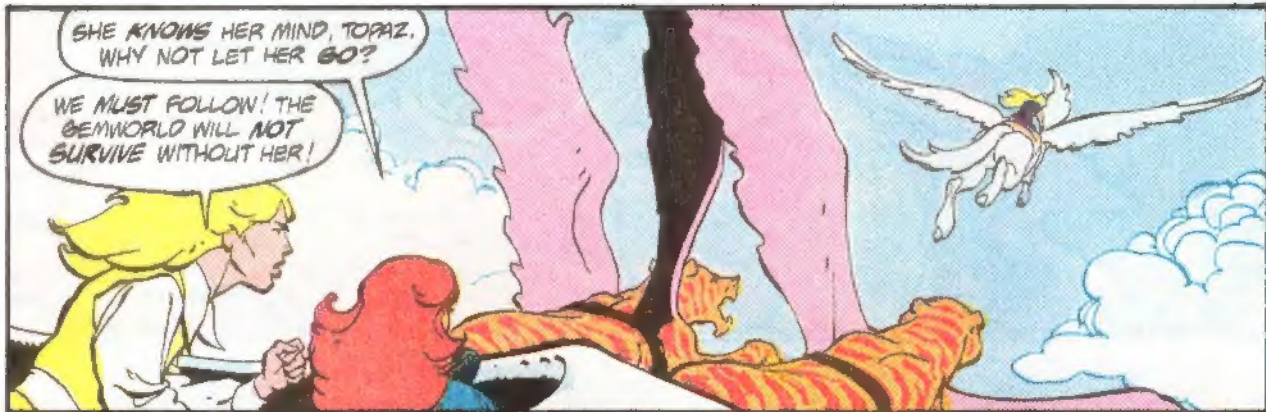
AND YOU KNOW SOMETHING?
I DON'T HAVE TO BE.
UNLIKE YOU, I HAVE
SOMEWHERE ELSE
TO GO.

BUT-- AMETHYST!
WHAT OF YOUR
RESPONSIBILITY TO
THE GEMWORLD?

MY RESPONSIBILITY
IS TO THOSE WHO
LOVE ME! MY FAMILY,
MY FRIENDS!

MY REAL
FRIENDS!





SHE KNOWS HER MIND, TOPAZ.
WHY NOT LET HER GO?

WE MUST FOLLOW! THE
GEMWORLD WILL NOT
SURVIVE WITHOUT HER!

THE LUSH,
PEACEFUL LAND
PASSES SWIFTLY
BELOW THEM...

UNTIL, IN THE
PLACE THAT WAS
ONCE THE REALM
OF DARK ORAL--



WHAT THE--??
WHAT'S GOING
ON?!

THE TERRAIN--
PLANTS, STREAMS,
LIFE ITSELF--
IS SUCKED INTO
A SWIRLING
VORTEX...

...THAT SPIRALS
ITS WAY THROUGH
A GLISTENING,
WAITING PORTAL...

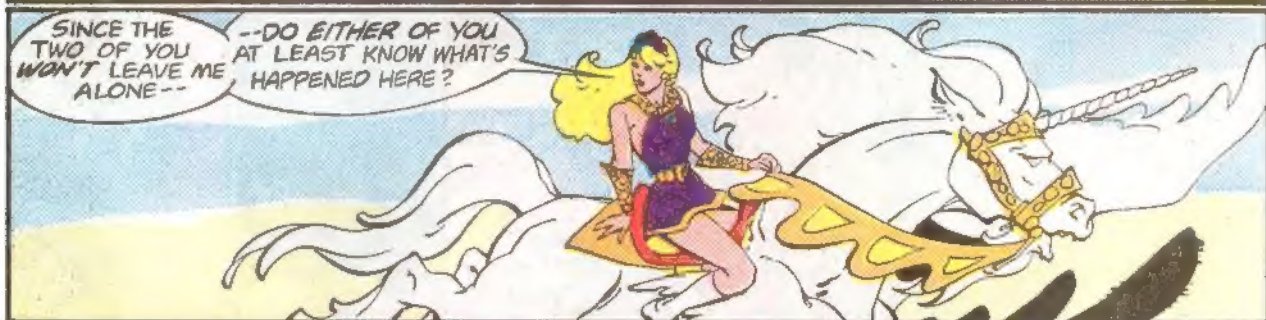


MY GOSH! WHERE'S
EVERYTHING
ALL GOING?!



THE FORESTS...
THE ANIMALS...
THERE'S NOTHING
LEFT DOWN
THERE...

...AND UP HERE,
I'VE GOT BOTH
TURQUOISE
AND TOPAZ ON
MY TAIL!



SINCE THE
TWO OF YOU
WON'T LEAVE ME
ALONE--

--DO EITHER OF YOU
AT LEAST KNOW WHAT'S
HAPPENED HERE?



PERHAPS THE ANCIENT
ONES RENEGED ON THEIR
BARBAIN, PRINCESS...*

* SEE LAST
ISSUE --KB.



THE DEVASTATION
STOPS PRECISELY
AT OPAL'S BORDERS,
TOPAZ



GLEEP?



THEN WHATEVER
FORCE WAS AT
WORK HERE KNEW
EXACTLY WHAT
IT WANTED!



AND WAS
POWERFUL
ENOUGH TO
TAKE IT!

THE A-MAZE-ING
OREO!

CHOCOLATE SANDWICH COOKIE



Can you help the
delicious **OREO** cookie
find the glass of milk?



I Imagine all the fun you can have with **OREO** cookies!

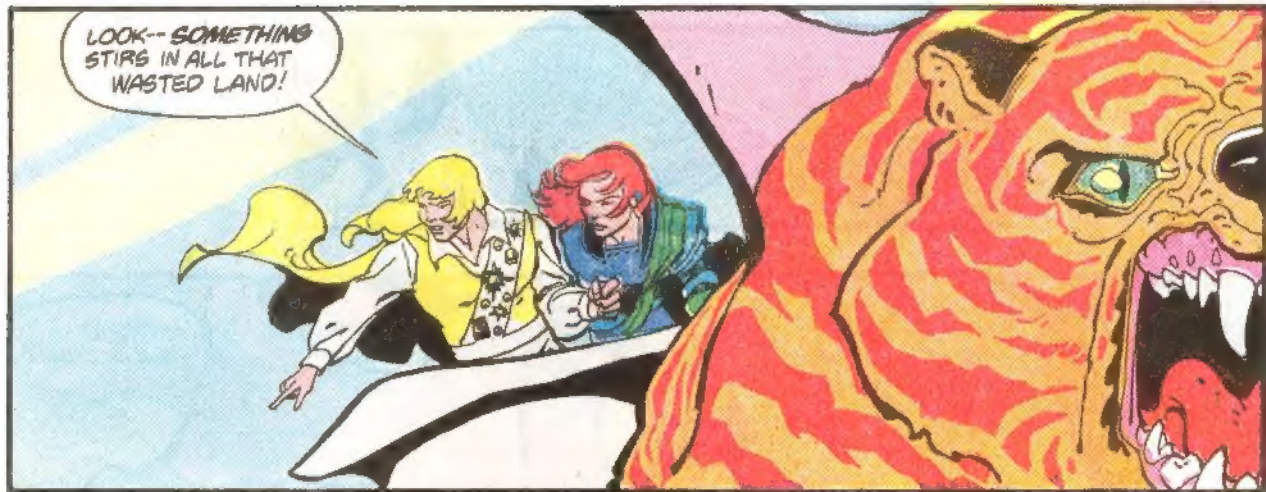


"Glubgrafutz"

(I SAVE THE ORANGE ONES TILL LAST.)



He knows as well as you do that all Reese's Pieces pieces have exactly the same delicious out-of-this-world peanut butter taste. But, you see, orange is his very favorite color. What's yours?



LOOK-- SOMETHING
STIRS IN ALL THAT
WASTED LAND!

AGAIN, THE GROUND
QUIVERS LIKE A
LIVING THING.
THEN...



IT BEGINS TO
TAKE AMORPHOUS
SHAPE...



THERE'S SOMETHING
BREAKING THROUGH!



NOW WHAT DO YOU
SUPPOSE THAT GREAT,
HULKING, UGLY ROCK
THINKS IT'S DOING?

THE "SOMETHING" IS THE
OPAL HEARTSTONE ITSELF,
TEARING THROUGH THE
STILL CADAVER THAT WAS
ONCE THE GROUNDS OF
FORTRESS OPAL!



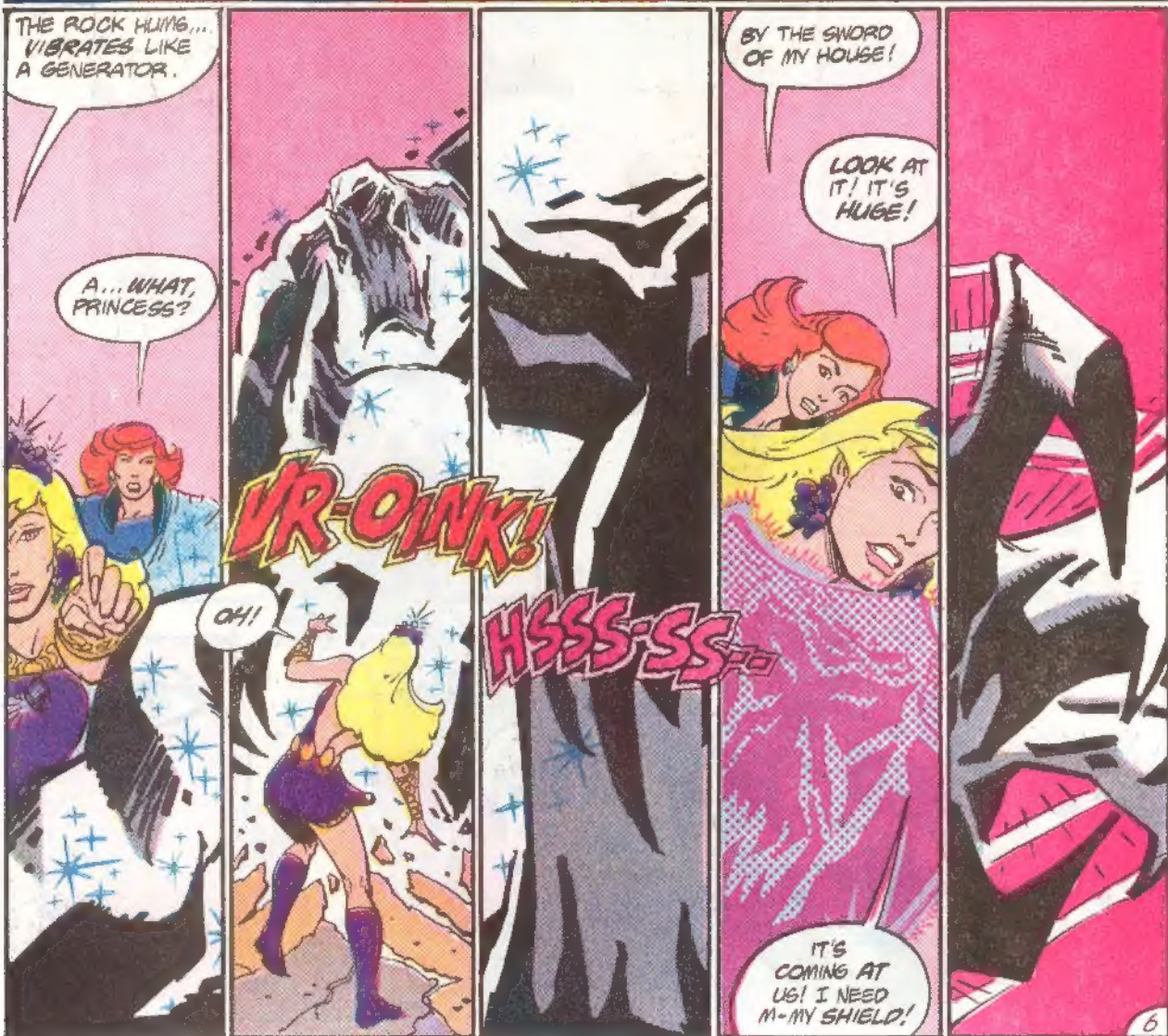
LET'S
HAVE A
CLOSER
LOOK!



EXACTLY THAT,
TOPAZ--IT THINKS
AND MOVES!

IT'S... THE
DARK LORD'S MAGIC!
I CAN SENSE IT!





WITH THE CASUAL CONTEMPT
OF BRUTE MAGIC FORCE, THE
GEMSTONE GIANT SCATTERS
THE TWO WARRIOR WOMEN.

THAT WRETCHED
BEAST! IF IT'S
HURT HER--!

TURQUOISE!

MY LOVE...

NOT A
THOUGHT
FOR ME...

NOT AS A
FRIEND--NOT AS
THE PRINCESS--
RULER OF THIS
WORLD...

I HATE
HIM FOR
THAT! AND I'LL
NEVER FORGIVE
HIM! NEVER!

THE AGATE BEAST,
ITSELF DEVOID OF
EMOTION, UNMINDFUL
OF PUNY HUMAN
PROBLEMS, READIES
ITSELF FOR ANOTHER
ONSLAUGHT.

FOR A
MOMENT'S
PAUSE THE
DARK CRYSTAL
GIANT
BLOWERS



BUT IS THERE
ETCHED IN
ITS JIBSAW
FEATURES THE
REFLECTION
OF A
FAMILIAR
FACE?

IT ATTACKS!

GRA-A!

THEN--

AK!

LOOK! IT'S
BEING PULLED
INTO THAT SAME
PORTAL AS
BEFORE--LIKE
EVERYTHING
ELSE!

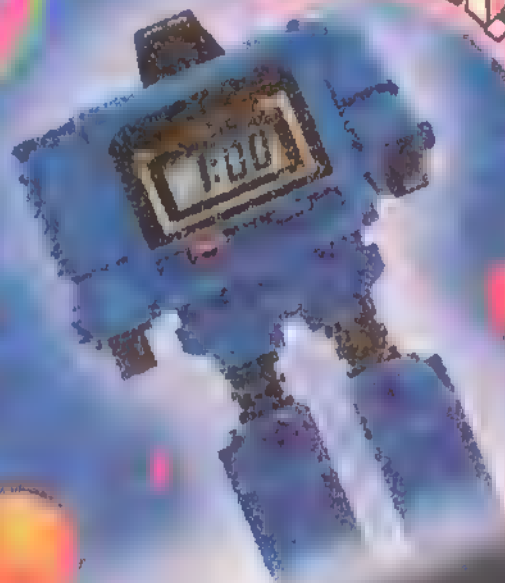
THE SAME
PORTAL,
PRINCESS--
BUT TO
WHERE?

MAYBE--THE
SPIRIT OF DARK
ORAL HAS FINALLY
FOUND REST...
SOMEWHERE

"AND EVERYTHING THAT
WAS PART OF HIM--
WENT WITH HIM"

"MAYBE DARK ORAL--AND
ALL THAT WAS HIS-- IS
GONE FROM THE GENA WORLD
FOREVER"

BONK!



Bonkers! Fruit Candy bonks you out of this world with a Robot-Watch

For the first time ever, you can have a watch that tells you the time and date and is made of durable blue plastic with a black band. Here's \$3.95 and the UPC symbol from 3 Super Fruity Bonkers! labels. That's the part with the lines and numbers that looks like this:



Get
a

Bonkers!

**Bonkers! Robot-Watch for \$3.95
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Please send me Bonkers! Robot-Watch, available from Bonkers! Fruit Candy. The watch shows the time and date and is made of durable blue plastic with a black band. Here's \$3.95 and the UPC symbol from 3 Super Fruity Bonkers! labels. That's the part with the lines and numbers that looks like this:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip _____ Age _____

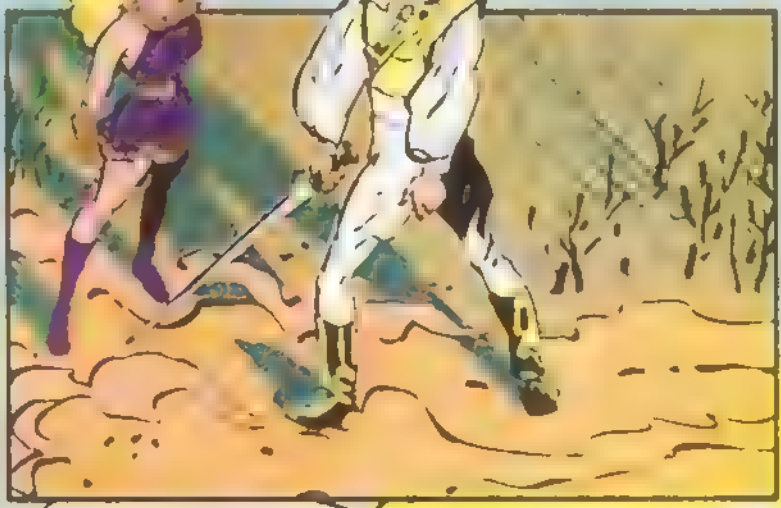
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Wyoming, MN 55092



All orders must be received by December 31, 1985.
Void where taxed or prohibited. Offer good only in U.S.
Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.
The watch comes with a 1 year limited warranty.

ANYWAY--
WE GOT R'D
OF IT

I WISH, PRINCESS,
I WERE AS CERTAIN
AS YOU THAT DARK
OPAL IS TRULY
NO MORE



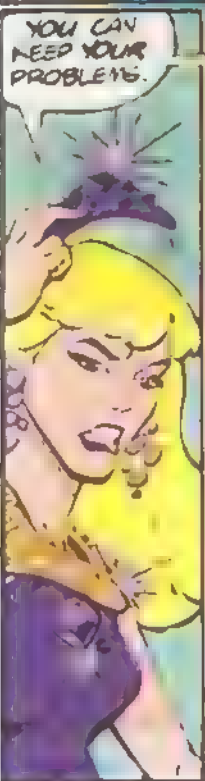
I TOO HAVE
DOUBTS OF
OPAL'S TOTAL
DEMISE,
AMETHYST.

BUT, THAT THREAT NOT-
WITHSTANDING--GEMWORLD'S
AFFAIRS ARE COMPLEX AND
NEED YOUR HIGHNESS'
UNIFYING FORCE.

MAY WE NOT PUT ASIDE
OUR PROBLEMS AND SERVE THE
GREATER GOOD: THE WELFARE
OF THE GEMWORLD?

NO

"WE" ARE NOT
PUTTING ASIDE
OUR PROBLEMS.
WE ARE NOT
GOING TO SERVE
THE GREATER
GOOD.



YOU CAN
KEEP YOUR
PROBLEMS.



YOU WORRY
ABOUT THE
GEMWORLD



IT'S YOUR
WORLD--YOU TAKE
CARE OF IT AS
FOR ME I'M
GOING--



--HOME!

ZIP??

A QUIET STREET
IN HUDSON, N.Y...

RITA? RITA! WAKE UP!
WHERE'S BREAKFAST?

BAM! BAM!

JUST LIKE HER MOTHER
WAS! LAZY DAMN KID--
WAKE UP!

SHE'S NOT
HOME, MR. B.

DON'T CALL ME THAT,
I'M YOUR FATHER! HEY--

--WHAT-- HER BED
HASN'T BEEN
SLEPT IN!!

IN CONCERT

TOLD YOU!

YOU KNOW WHERE
SHE IS?

SHE'S WITH
THAT KID-- CARL.
THE ONE WITH THE
WEIRD HAND?

HE PICKED
HER UP AT 3 A.M.--
THEN THEY WENT
TO HIS HOUSE.

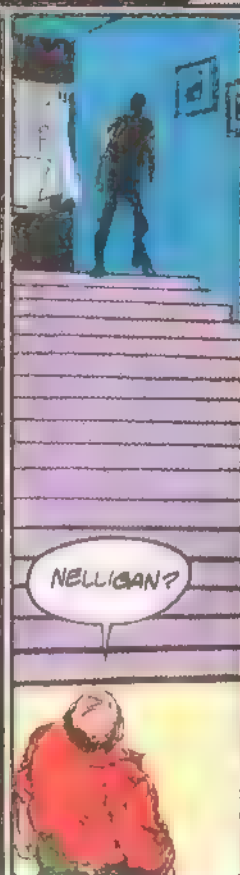
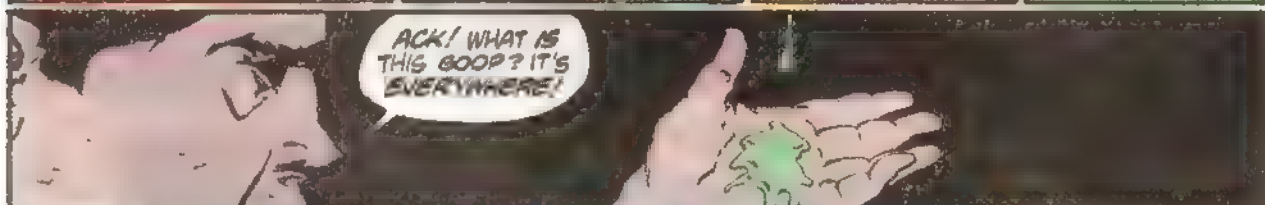
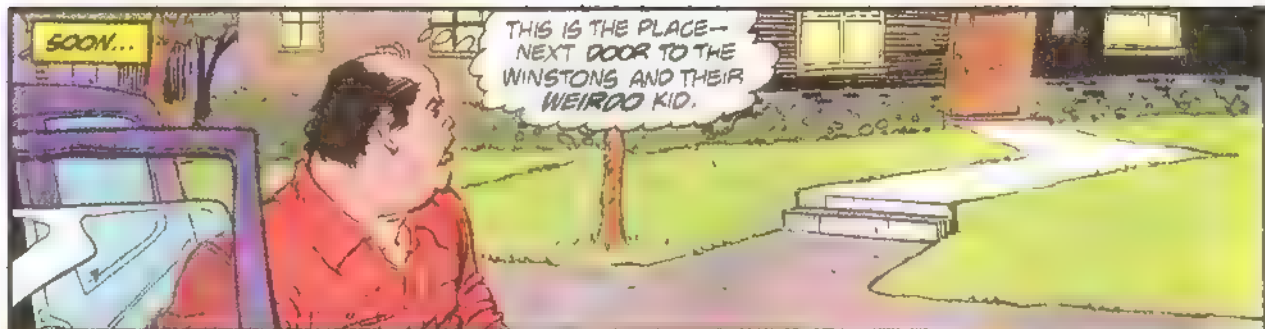
THREE
A.M., MR B!
IMAGINE.

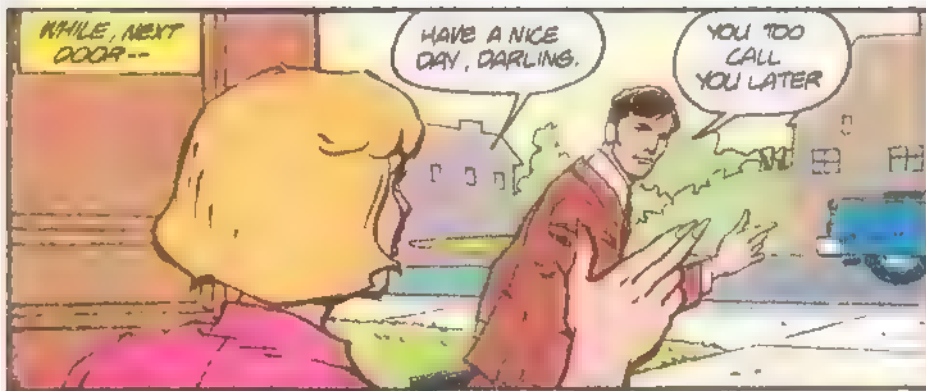
I LL BEAT
HER BLACK AND
BLUE! I LL
KILL HER!

CAN I WATCH?
OW!!

CALL ME
MR B AGAIN
AND I'LL
START WITH
YOU!

RI-TA'S GONNA B
B GET A BEA-TING
HUM-DE-DUM-DE
IT DE-DUM-DUM-

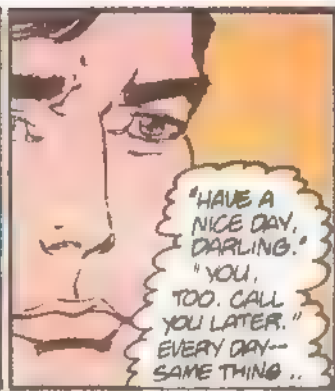




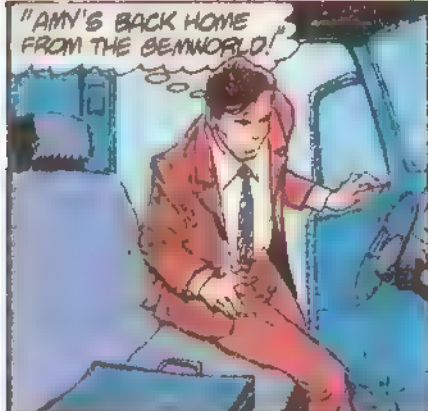
WHILE, NEXT DOOR--

HAVE A NICE DAY, DARLING.

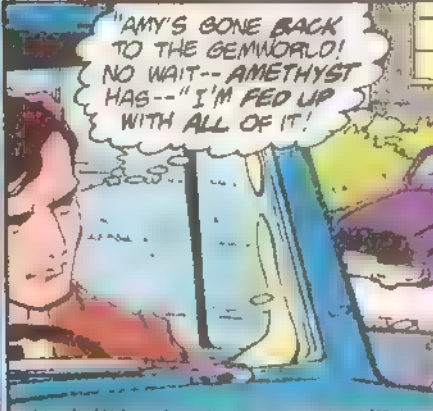
YOU TOO CALL YOU LATER



"HAVE A NICE DAY, DARLING." "YOU, TOO. CALL YOU LATER." EVERY DAY-- SAME THING ..



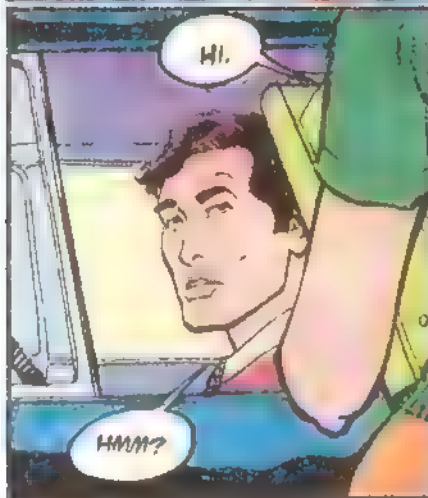
"AMY'S BACK HOME FROM THE GEMWORLD!"



"AMY'S GONE BACK TO THE GEMWORLD! NO WAIT-- AMETHYST HAS--" "I'M FED UP WITH ALL OF IT!"



HMM. STAN BECKMAN'S CAR. I DIDN'T THINK HE WAS NEIGHBORLY ENOUGH TO VISIT ANYBODY.



HI.

HMM?



IT'S ME-- GINA. CAN I HAVE A LIFT, MR. WINSTON? OTHERWISE I'LL BE LATE--FOR YOUR CLASS.

OH. YES, OF COURSE. GET IN GINA



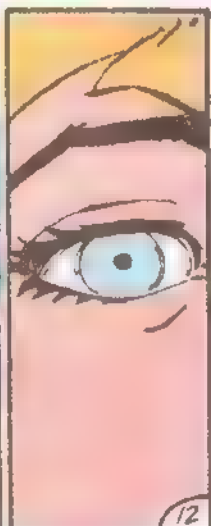
YOU OKAY, MR WINSTON? YOU LOOK KIND OF-- GLUM.

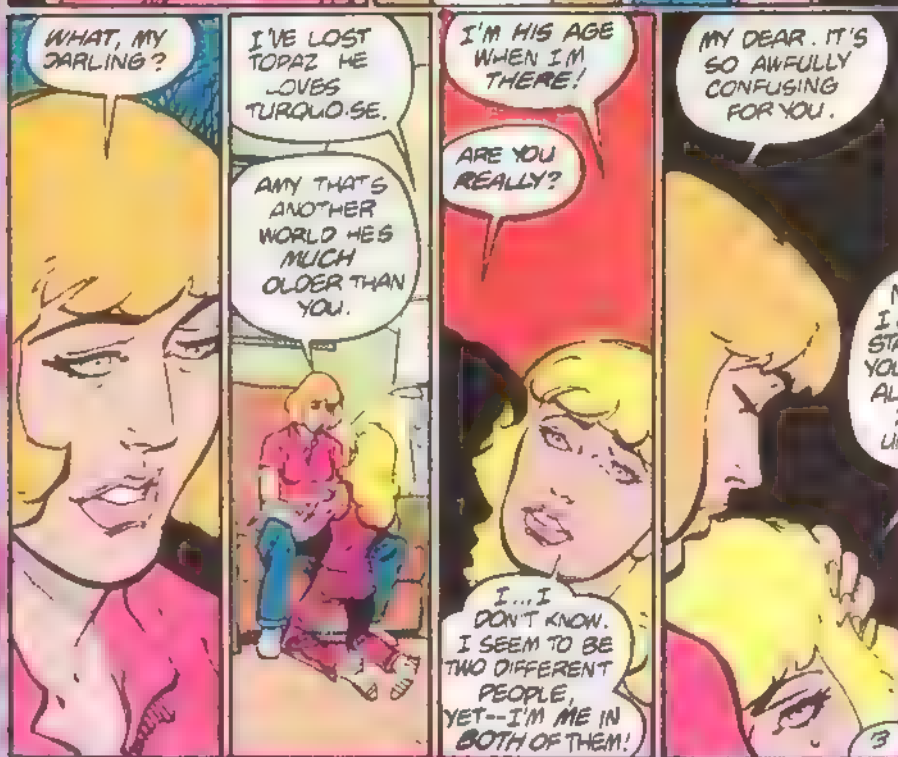
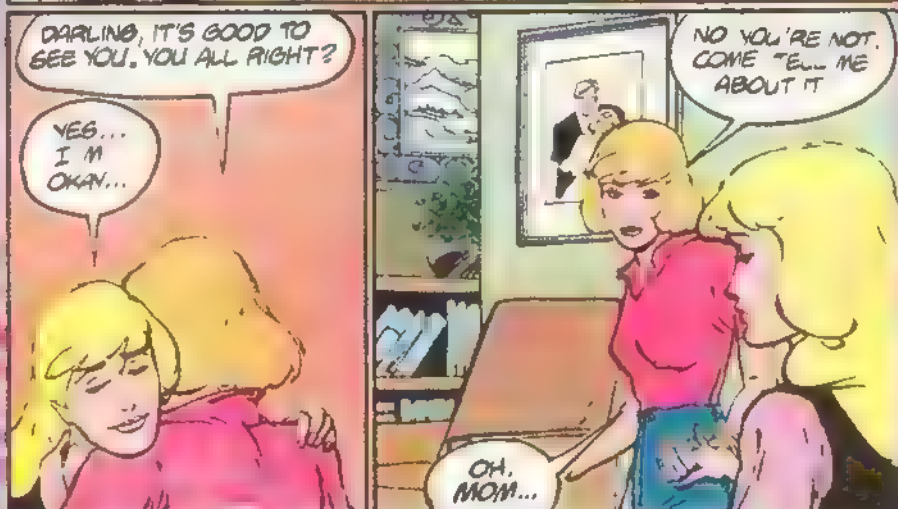
LIFE SOMETIMES HAS A WAY OF-- BLUMMING THINGS UP GINA



TELL ME ABOUT IT, YOU KNOW? SOMETIMES IT HELPS TO TALK.

WELL, I DON'T WANT TO BORE YOU TO DEATH WITH MY PROBLEMS, BUT...





MEANWHILE...

THERE IS NO
RITA HERE. THERE
IS NOTHING HERE...
FOR YOU. GO.

LISTEN, ODDBALL--MY
RITA CAME HERE LAST
NIGHT WITH THAT
CREEP CARL AND--

OH-OOOH--!

--AHH! LET GO
LET GO-AAH!

LET GO! LET GO!
LET GO!

WAP!
WAP!
WAP!

THUMP!

MY.. GOD...
WHAT IS IT?

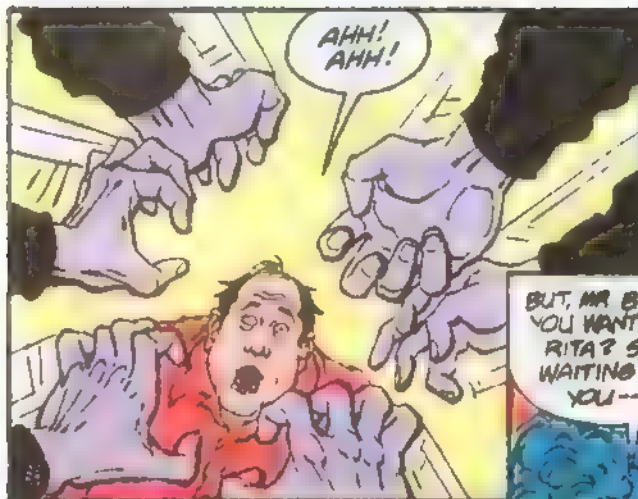
YOU MAY WELL ASK--

WHAT ARE WE ALL?

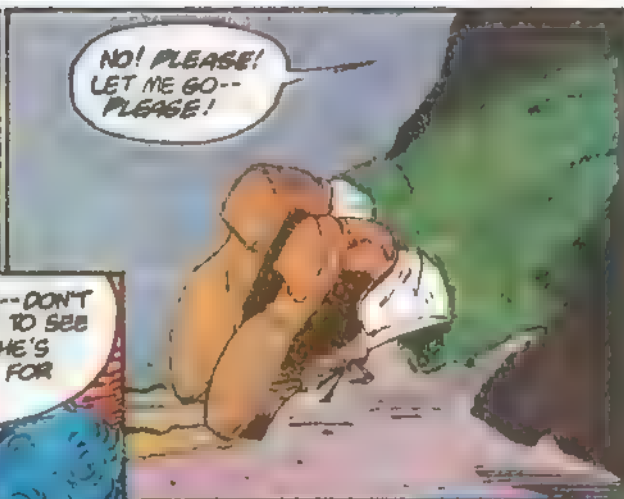
HI MR B

YOU REALLY
SHOULDN'T
HAVE COME
HERE.

BUT I'M
GLAD YOU
DID.



AHH!
AHH!



NO! PLEASE!
LET ME GO--
PLEASE!

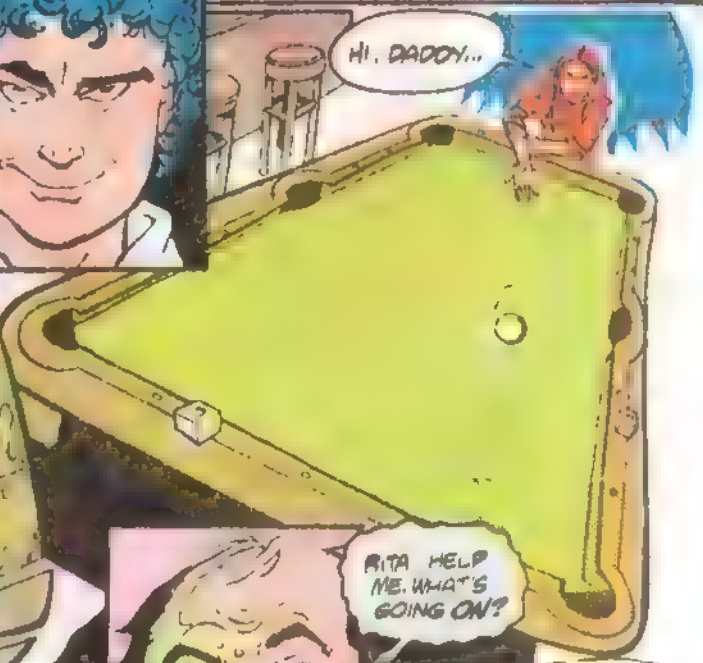


BUT, MR B--DON'T
YOU WANT TO SEE
RITA? SHE'S
WAITING FOR
YOU--



"--IN THE PLAYROOM."

WHAT?
RITA? WHERE
ARE YOU?



HI, DADDY...



RITA HELP
ME. WHAT'S
GOING ON?



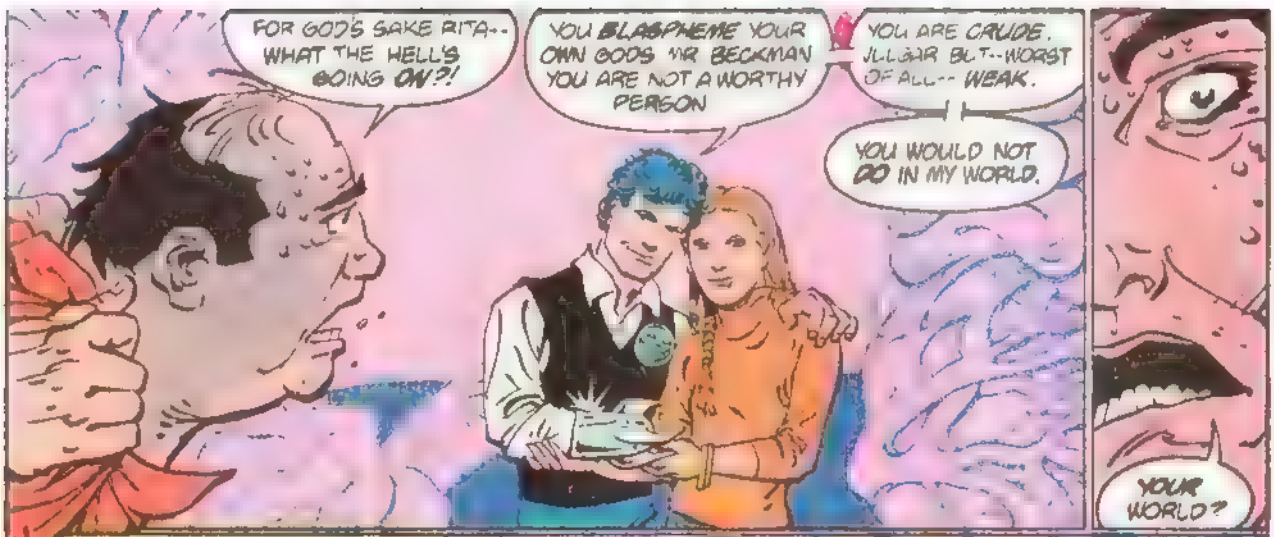
NOTHING YET

I'M GLAD
YOU'RE HERE,
DADDY

WE ALL
ARE



P-PLEASE...



FOR GOD'S SAKE RITA--
WHAT THE HELL'S
GOING ON?!

YOU BLASPHEME YOUR
OWN GODS MR BECKMAN
YOU ARE NOT A WORTHY
PERSON

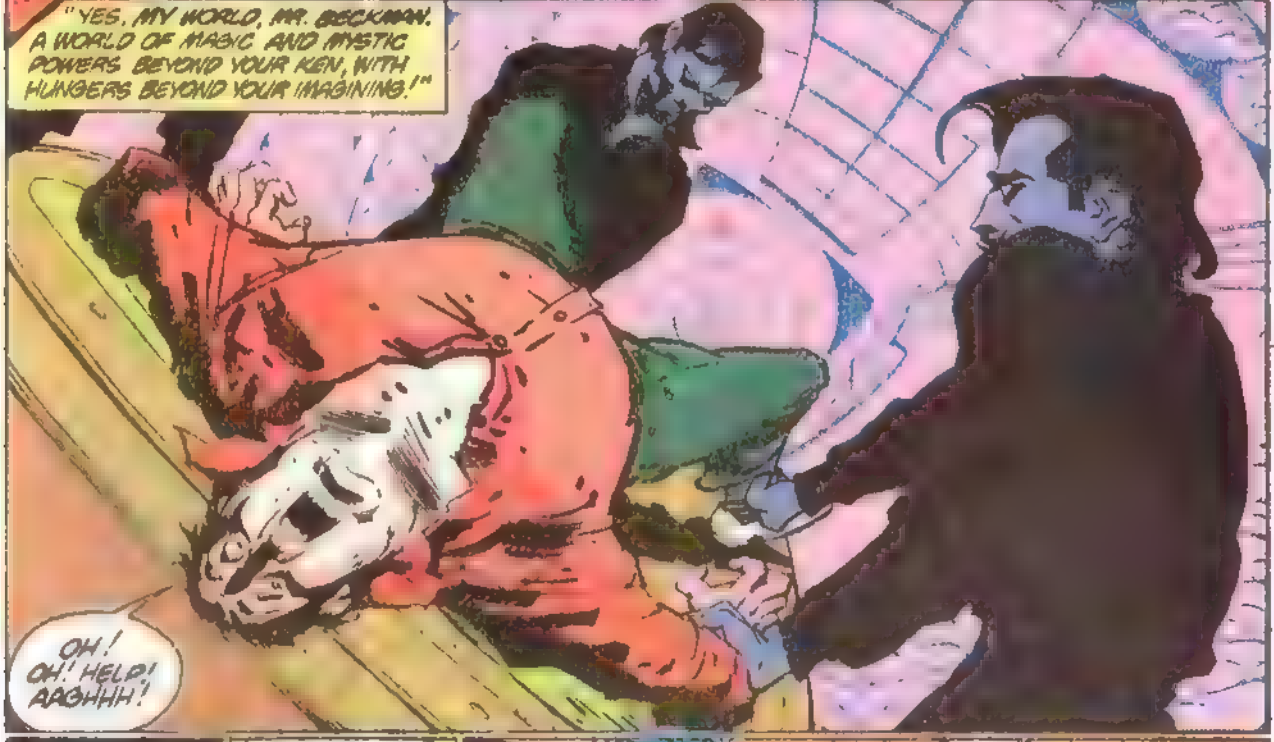
YOU ARE CRADE,
JLLGAR BUT--WORST
OF ALL-- WEAK.

YOU WOULD NOT
DO IN MY WORLD.



YOUR
WORLD?

"YES, MY WORLD, MR. BECKMAN.
A WORLD OF MAGIC AND MYSTIC
POWERS BEYOND YOUR KEN, WITH
HUNGERS BEYOND YOUR IMAGINING!"



OH!
OH! HELP!
AAGHHH!



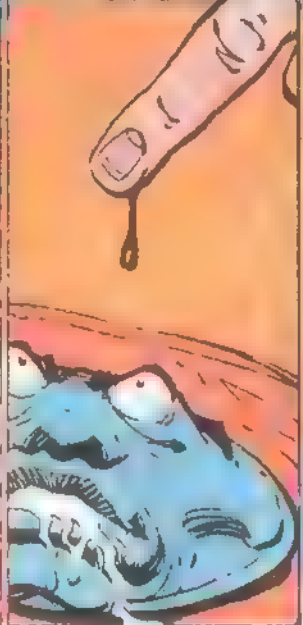
THIS--WAS
ONCE DARK
OPAL'S CLASP



NOW I AM ITS
GUARDIAN.



ITS
PROTECTOR



WITH
IT, I SHALL
SUCCEED WHERE
OPAL'S DARK
MIGHT... FAILED.

I AM...
THE INHERITOR.

ON VIDEOCASSETTE

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STARFIRE™

IS GETTING
Married...

THE NEW TEEN

TITANS™

...AND IT'S NOT TO

NIGHTWING™

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GLOW ^{THE} DARK POSTERS

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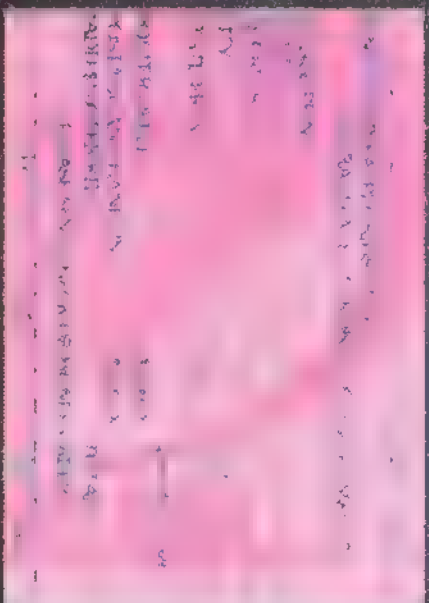
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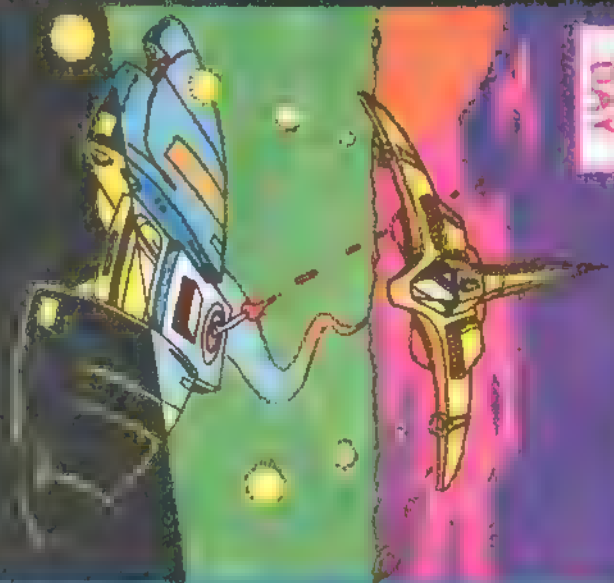
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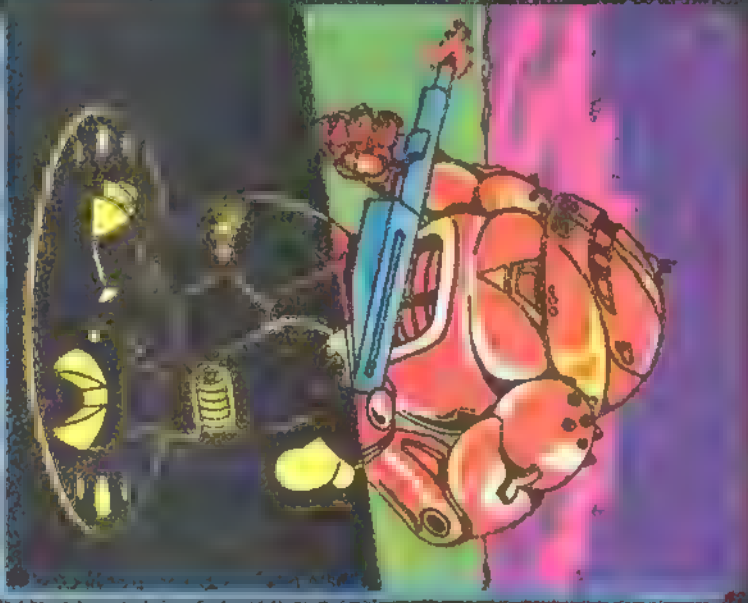
Pineapple




DAY



NIGHT





YOU SEEM EAGER.
AS EAGER AS I?
PERHAPS EVEN
MORE SO.

POP!

"NOW THE DIE IS CAST.
I, WHO NEVER OWNED
MYSTIC POWER--AM
NOW ITS AGENT. I AM
ITS CONDUIT--TO USE
FOR MY PURPOSE.
MY NEED. MY DESTINY.

"I KNOW I CAN PLACE MY
TRUST AND FAITH IN YOU..."

THERE WE
CONTINUE.

'BYE 'BYE,
DADDY.

'BYE 'BYE,
CARL.



A PLEASANT STREET, ON
A PLEASANT, SUNNY DAY.

BUT, OVER THE NELLIGAN HOUSE,
ROILING AND CHURNING, AN UNNATURAL
LINK BETWEEN THE GEMWORLD AND
EARTH DARKENS THE SKY--

--CARL'S VERY OWN
PRIVATE STORM.

THE GEMWORLD.

CAN YOU SPARE TIME
FOR YOUR CHILDREN
TODAY, MY LORD?

NOT TODAY,
SAAREN.

I'M DEEPLY
TROUBLED.

WHAT IS
IT, LORD?

IN LIBERATING MY
REALM FROM FIRE
JADE'S TRAP, I
SMASHED MY
GEMSTONE
AMULET.*

SINCE
THEN, I'VE
HAD A FEELING
OF -- DREAD.

*SEE ISSUE #6-K8

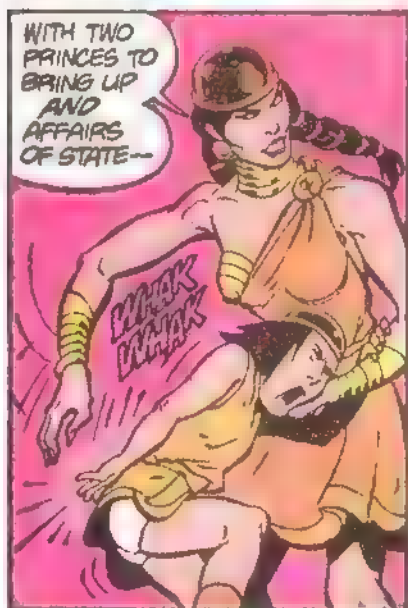
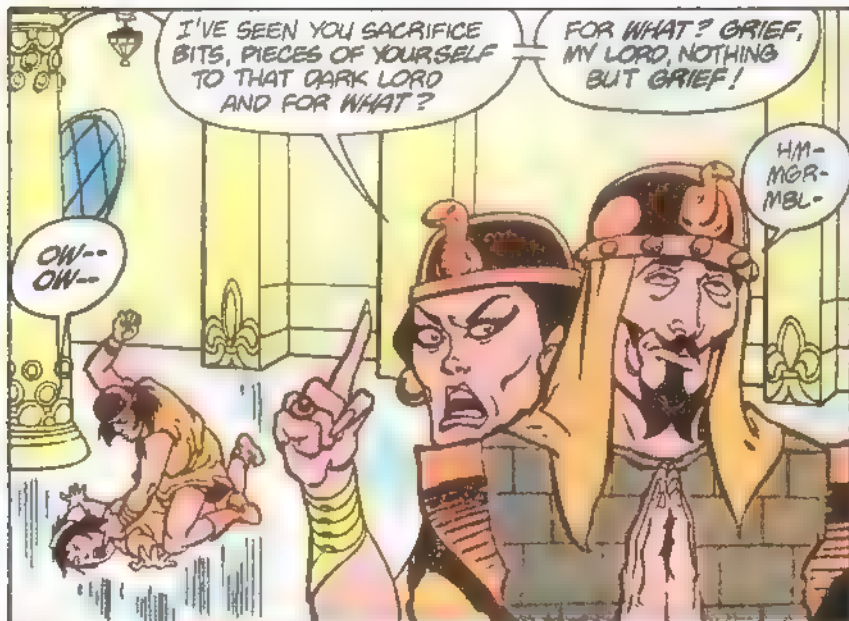
BUT YOUR SMITHS
WILL HEW A STONE
FROM THE TRUE
SARDONYX LYING
DORMANT
BENEATH
THE CITY.

I KNOW--
I KNOW--

WHAT AILS YOU, THEN? WHERE'S
YOUR SPINE? WHERE'S THE
YOUNG, CUNNING PRINCE WHO
CAME COURTING AT MY
MOTHER'S HOUSE?

OW! LEA'
ME ALONE!

I'VE
SEEN YOU
GROVEL BEFORE
DARK OPAL...



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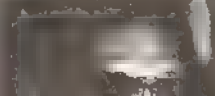
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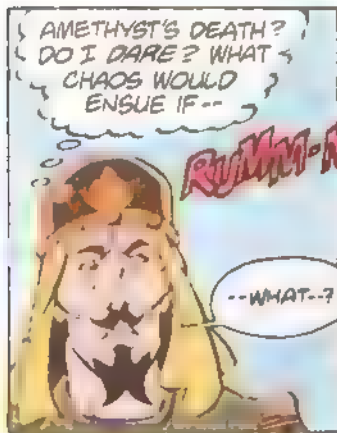
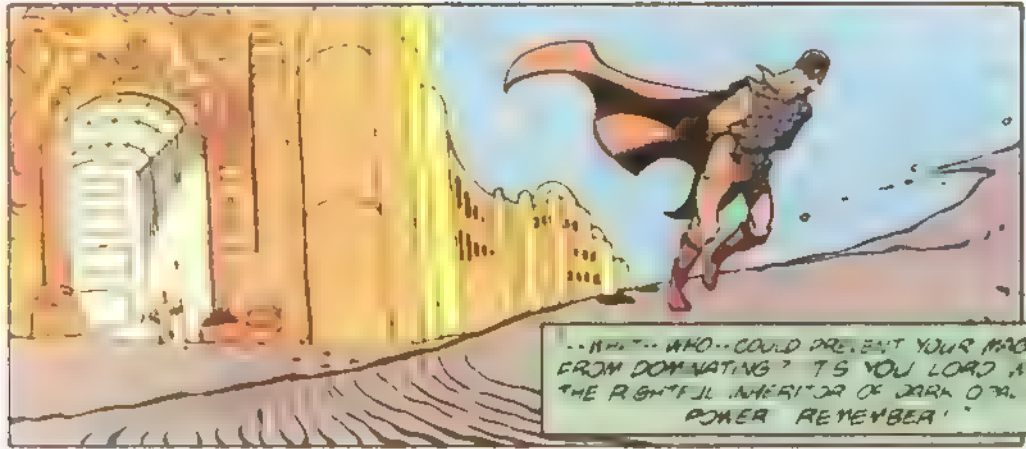
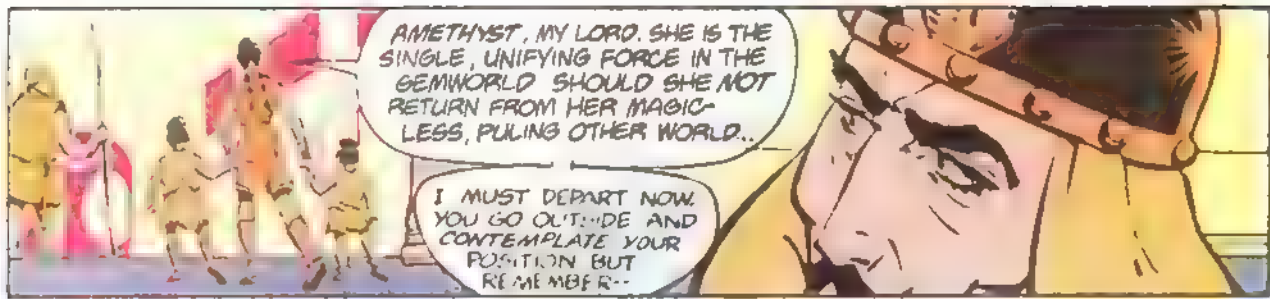
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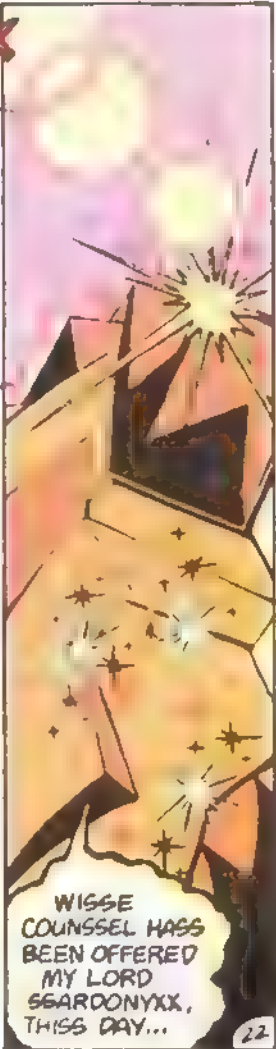
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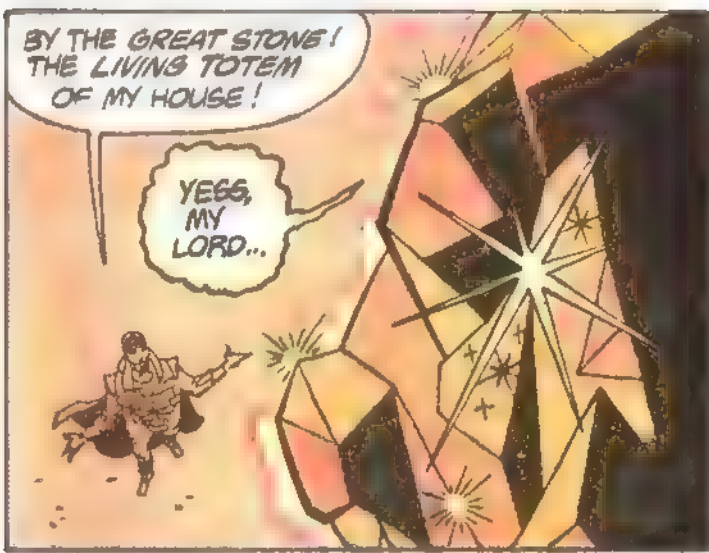


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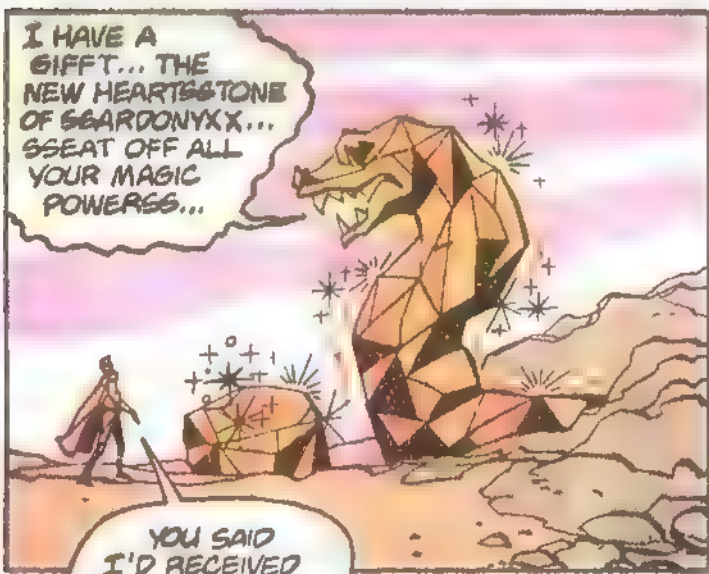
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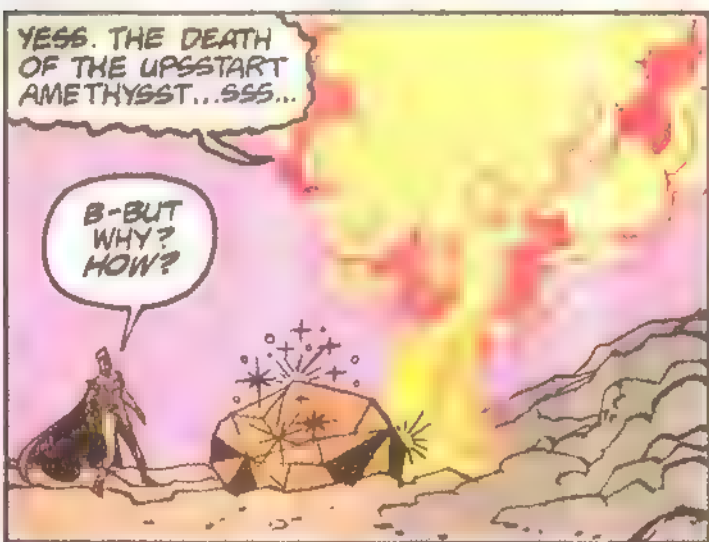
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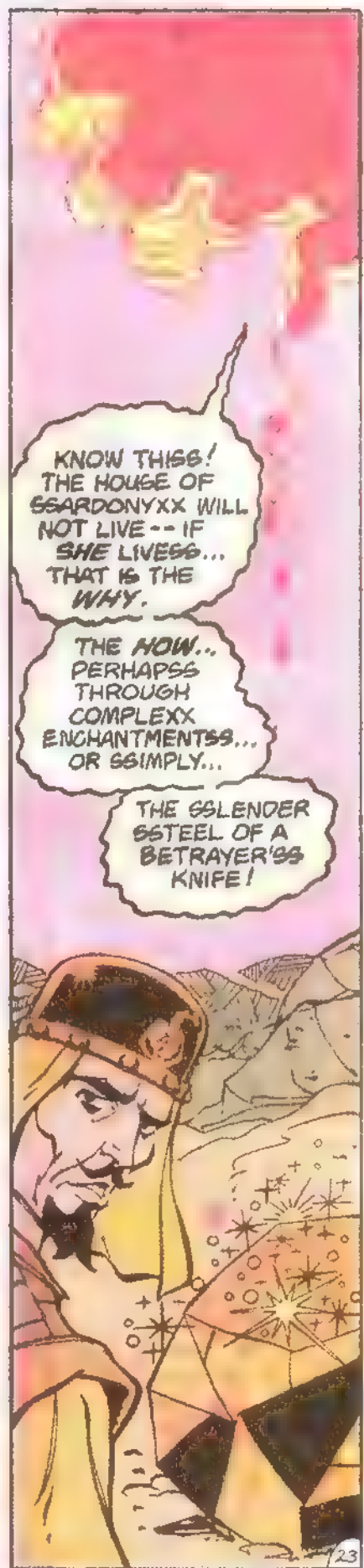
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Dear Karen Berger,

After reading the entire AMETHYST series (the preview in LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #298, the twelve-issue maxi-series, DC COMICS PRESENTS #83, and the current series up to #7), I find that Amethyst is in a way undergoing a serious psychological crisis, because though she is a young woman on Gemworld, she still has the psychological development of a thirteen-year-old on Earth as Amy Winston. Because of this, her sense of responsibility is at times lacking, prompting her to rash actions that could hurt many people (remember her "battle frenzy" in #3 of the current series?), something a more adult personality will be less prone to do. What do you think?

As for the problems about differentiating between the members of the same noble family (already addressed by several other readers), I suggest a solution that comes from the *Elquest* series done by Richard and Wendy Pini: a secret soul name for each member of the royal family, known only to the immediate family members, or if they are married, his or her mate. It worked very well in *Elquest*, so why not here? (Note: the concept of a secret name is not an original one; many tribes in Africa give such names to their children at birth.) At least we won't have to give the U.S. Census Bureau fits as reader Gary Thompson suggests...

As for Fire Jade (a.k.a. Lady Emerald), I seriously think she is under a spell of that creature that hangs around her. I say this because her words on the last page of #7 are of mixed feelings, not really sure if she wants to be so evil. Also, I have this suspicious feeling that creature is related to the shadowy being plotting the destruction of the universe in the maxi-series CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS. I say this because the natural disasters happening on Gemworld are almost identical to the disasters happening on Earths 1, 2, 3, etc., just before they got vaporized. I have a hunch that Amethyst and her fellow nobles will have a pivotal role to play in the CRISIS maxi-series.

Finally, please end soon the love triangle between Amethyst, Topaz, and Turquoise soon! I'm interested in a good fantasy story, not in love intrigues! If I want to enjoy such things, I'll watch *Dallas* and *Dynasty*!

Sincerely,

Raymond Chuang
2850 American River Drive
Sacramento, CA 95864

Your analysis of Amethyst/Amy's personality is very much on target, Raymond. Granted, her Gemworld experiences have made her more mature or "worldly" than the typical young teenager, but she is still only thirteen. When Amy's faced with problems in the Gemworld, her emotional inexperience will at times continue to surface.

Dear Karen,

With AMETHYST #7, we see a glimpse of the Gemworld's past. It was nice seeing Lord and Lady Amethyst, along with a much younger Dark Opal. It appears that even in his early teens, he had plans to rule the Gemworld. I wonder what he was like as a baby?

I hope Amethyst confronts Topaz soon and sees what a fickle prince he has turned out to be. The fiery Turquoise and the beautiful Amethyst deserve much better than him.

Seeing Opal again makes me wish for more characters from the maxi-series to make an appearance. How about the Emissaries of Varn? Or a peak at a younger Granch? We never learned much about his character.

Think about it.

Eric Massey
Rt. 8 Box 418
Statesville, NC 28677

As we saw this issue, Eric, the long-awaited confrontation between the love-torn Gemworlders occurred. Topaz has made his choice, and Amethyst hers. But, all's never as it seems (especially in this series), and that chapter in Amethyst's life isn't definitely over, yet. As for those faceless wonders from Varn ... they just happen to be making an appearance in next month's story. How's that for service!

Dear Amethyst,

I have been following your exploits ever since your preview in LEGION #298 and through your own maxi-series with my disgusting brother, Dark Opal. I would have told you all about the fool's insane plan to take over the Gemworld, but he stranded me here in "WHITE OPAL HEAVEN." I am overfilled with happiness that Lady Turquoise and Prince Topaz have found me.

Of course I watched your battle with Lady Emerald/Fire Jade with excitement. I could not find one dud or low point within it, thanks to Dan M. and

Gary, and I couldn't have looked better with Dan J. and Karl doing me.

I can not wait to reclaim my throne and find my long-lost daughter, Rita. Oh, by the way, is it too late for the Name That Unicorn Contest? I lose track of time up here in "WHITE OPAL HEAVEN." Why not February? After all, it is the month in which Amethyst is the birthstone. I send my sincere thanks to Lady Turquoise and Prince Topaz.

White Opal
by way of

"T.M." Maple, Jr.

Weston, Ont., Canada

Thanks, T.M., Jr. (my, those Maples are multiplying!) for sending White Opal's missive our way. We're glad that Turquoise and Topaz found you, too, and we're very much looking forward to seeing more of you real soon. But, in the meantime, can you tell us one thing? If Rita's really your long-lost daughter, how'd she wind up on Earth, huh?

Dear Karen,

In re AMETHYST:

You've got another good comic here. With AMETHYST and BLUE DEVIL, DC has staked out a nice chunk of comics territory: comics with the simplicity and innocence of the early 1960's comics, combined with today's tighter art and writing, especially in characterization and subplotting.

For many years only THE FLASH retained this lighthearted sort of storytelling: when other series (like Marvel's *Nova* or *Machine Man*) tried for it, they failed. But FLASH never sold well, and as a result underwent much tinkering aimed at making it more "relevant," i.e. more like most other super-hero series; these tinkering resulted in a comic which had lost its simplicity and innocence, but which didn't work as a normal series either. So much for FLASH, and for a while so much for that whole type of comic.

Then, happily, AMETHYST appeared; I bought the maxi-series, hoping against hope that it would sell well. Then BLUE DEVIL. And, lo and behold, they seem to be selling. Lightheartedness is back in style.

Please, keep that simplicity and innocence. AMETHYST couldn't work without a slight tongue-in-cheek feel to it, any more than FLASH or BLUE DEVIL. The series' feel is at least as important as its fairly standard characters and plotting—to me, at any rate. Not every

writer and artist can be right for AMETHYST: a Frank Miller AMETHYST might be very impressive, but it would destroy the series' innocence, and as FLASH has shown, once lost, that innocence can't be recaptured. AMETHYST is for the Mishkins and Cohns, the Colons, Estradas, and Dicks—writers and artists whose styles reflect some of that same innocence. As editor, the responsibility is yours: innocence—in comics or elsewhere—is a fragile commodity, easily destroyed by abuse or neglect. Keep AMETHYST the simple and unambiguous comic it is now, and you'll have something unique and valuable; lose that quality, and it will be neither.

Keep up the good work—and power to the purple! (I'm not usually one for slogans, but that does have a ring to it, doesn't it?)

Gayden Wren
62 Willow Street
Garden City, NY 11530

As we've said many times before, Gayden, AMETHYST is a modern fairy tale, and in keeping with that mood, the "simplicity and innocence" you cite come with the territory. But, we still feel that we have our character and plot complexities as well. (How's that for a contradiction!)

Dear DCCer's,

I like Amethyst, but does Amy have to be a kid? It's different, I have to admit, but I don't like it. Could you change it? Some freak accident could happen to change it in the Gemworld. Her parents could freak, she would have to go to a higher class, but she would not be as smart as everyone else. Her new friends could think she was childlike. Others might lead her into things she doesn't understand like drugs and other peer pressures.

Also let her use her powers on Earth, but not with the same level of strength. Let the supporting cast have lives with interesting developments.

Christian Collins
Rt. 2 Box 3184
Mineral Bluff, GA 30559

We think your ideas definitely have merit, Christian, but in our eyes AMETHYST works so well as a concept because of the dichotomy between the two selves.

Dear Karen:

I've just read the latest lettercol and I don't think that you can justify Princess Emerald as a neurotic suffering from "middle child syndrome." It more befits the bumptious, hard-drinking, brawling Lady Turquoise than the resolute, competent, and decisive Princess Emerald.

Throughout the maxi-series, Princess Emerald saw her duty and did it. She shouldered her burdens and bore them in a manner befitting her mother's daughter. Also, how long was she the "middle" child? I suspect that like most

second daughters, she was very much her "daddy's girl." There is no indication when he was killed (and this must have been one of Lady Emerald's sorrows mentioned by Citrina at the Well of Vision). He may have been one of those who attempted to stand against Dark Opal and failed. We do know that there is at least a 7-year difference in ages between Emmy and her sister. I suspect the Princess has been very much a "little mother" to Emmy as well as big sister, for she is very much her mother's daughter and seems to be of the same maternal type. The Princess hasn't yet mounted her throne, although there seems to be no reason for her not to have at least tried; except that her little sister was not at her side.

Basically, I doubt that Lady Emerald or most of her subjects expected the eldest would ever mount the Emerald throne. Prince Garnet's account of Dark Opal's attraction to Lady Emerald and her father's fear of reprisals indicate a reason why the Lady felt such great guilt over her daughter's fate. She must have spurned Opal for her Lord and I doubt that he was one to forget. Arlyan was too shrewd a vizier not to anticipate every possibility and begin training the younger girl. He might even have helped to fill the void in her life that her father's death left; as she tried to fill the void in Emmy's life that her mother's very natural preoccupation with the Princess who would pay the price of Opal's vengeance must have created.

Throughout the maxi-series, Princess Emerald showed the authority of one who doesn't question her authority. She accepted the responsibility and carried it out to the best of her ability. She is like Amethyst in this. Her anger at being overlooked during the strategy sessions indicated to me that she had been DEFACED Lady Emerald for QUITE some time. She was competent at dealing with affairs of state (a state of affairs which seemed accepted by all concerned without question). When her daughterly devotion gave out, she didn't ask the vizier what to do; she told him what she was going to do and gave him his orders. The words "someone in this house must act decisively" were probably at least thought many times before. In all likelihood, it was always her lot to be that someone.

I doubt that the Emerald Domain feels inadequately governed. Their new Lady chose the right side and helped free the Gemworld from Opal by risking her life at Amethyst's side. What more could they ask? Besides, people tend to believe in omens and the second Princess Emerald was the only one of the three girls to have the silver-blond hair of BOTH preceding rulers.

Regarding the question of Sardonyx power. If I remember correctly, the Royal Houses were each capped by a gemstone of incredible power. Power which could only be commanded by those of royal blood. These, the "true" Amethyst, Opal, etc., were the actual source of the nobles' power. I assume they used the pendants, etc., that they carried around with them as "ter-

minals" to siphon power from the capstone. Since any electrician can tell you about line drop, it stands to reason that they would be at their supreme power level on their home ground (since the power doesn't have far to travel). Therefore, although Sardonyx may have been upset by destroying the stone he had carried all his life and probably inherited from his predecessor, he should probably only have to cut himself a new "terminal" gem from the "True Sardonyx" (capstone) in order to be on-line again. Besides, Fire Jade and the demon she served both admitted that Sardonyx had recovered ALL the power they had stolen from him. (Aren't readers a pain?)

One last thought: I think that the new Lady Emerald and Amethyst should get along quite well since they have not only Emmy in common, but such similarities in their lives. When Amethyst was lamenting Citrina's death, I have no doubt she was saying everything that Princess Emerald must have been feeling. She, too, saw the Stalker take someone she had fought hard to save. In their cases, "I know just how you feel" is the exact truth!

On the whole, you edit a truly fine book. Not many work as you seem to at continuity and consistency. It's very reassuring to know that the writers and editors care as much about their characters as people as the fans do.

I'd tell you to keep up the good work, but that would be like taking coals to Newcastle. I'll just leave it at "THANKS!"

Sincerely,
Carla Ames
(no address given)

There's an understandable fear that something bad will befall an "heir apparent" of any throne, Carla, and that's why mostly all royal children are groomed for the ruling seat. The fact that the middle Princess Emerald was so well prepared emotionally and intellectually to fill her sister's and then mother's shoes exhibits a strong, solid sense of character. Now, some people would say that middle children are over-achievers, striving harder than their siblings—but some wouldn't—so we'll leave the question of the princess and her possible "middle child syndrome" right there.

NEXT MONTH: A "different" kind of fantasy awaits Amy, right in the middle of Hudson, N.Y.! Until then, take care, all!—Karen



MEANWHILE...

Guest Meanwhile

The DC softball team, the Bullets, kicked off the 1985 season with a pizza party pep rally in the Production Department one afternoon in mid-May. It was the day of the first game of the season and team captain Bob Rozakis was looking forward to getting the team out there. Unfortunately, it rained and the game was cancelled.

"This is incredible," said Bob. "The major leagues play over 500 games this year without a rainout, but we get washed away the first day. This could be an omen that the water shortage in New York will be ended as long as I keep scheduling games."

But Bob's dismal forecast about the weather did not come true. A week later, the Bullets took the field against The Nation and, despite a valiant ten-run comeback in the last inning to tie the game, lost it 21-20. "Not exactly what you'd call a pitcher's duel," mused Bob, one of the pitchers in question. "Still, it was good to see the team get a lot of hits and put together a big inning when we were down 20-10."



The Bullets is a team made up from all parts of the DC staff with a few freelancers and "Friends of the family" included in the mix. Not surprisingly, it is Bob's own Production Department that is best represented on the team: John Holowski, Helen Ramirez, Helen Vesik, and Muffy Greenough were joined this year by fellow producers Lisa Saladino and Julia Schick. "It may look like Bob demands that we play softball, but that isn't the case," said one production person who preferred to remain anonymous. "Mr. Nice Guy just happens to hire people who like to play. I think it was the first thing he asked me when I applied for a job."

The business end of the company is represented by Marketing Director

Bruce Bristow and Director of Foreign Rights Chantal d'Aulnis, plus Robin Phelps, Bonnie Miller, and Linda Robak. ("Don't talk about the number of production people on the team," points out Bob. "Didn't anybody notice that half of Bruce's department is on the team too?") And Walter Wang, owner of Comics Unlimited Ltd., one of DC's direct distributors, ranks as one of our favorite "Friends of the family" when game time rolls around.

The Editorial Department is represented by Len Wein and Barbara Randall, with freelancers Bob Smith, Karl Kesel, Phil Clarke, Shawn McManus, Ashley Tillman, and Tom Hill adding their skills on the field as well as contributing their writing and art talents to our books.

Robyn McBryde, known to her teammates as "Shake McBake," is the team's co-captain. It was Robyn who organized the pep rally, as well as last year's Friday afternoon picnic game against DC's sister company, Licensing Company of America. "Which we won," Robyn hastens to point out. "LCA is itching for a rematch this year and we're ready for them."

"Softball at DC is lots of fun," says Rozakis, "and a tradition that dates back to 1976, when the team played a single game against Marvel. Bob Smith and I are the only veterans of that year's team. Len Wein played in that game too, but he played for them. DC won the game, by the way."

These days the team doesn't win too many games, but it doesn't seem to matter to the players. "We're out there to have fun," says Bob. "We've played against teams that seem to care only about having a winning record, doing everything from rearranging their batting order at convenient times to blatant cheating just to win. I don't usually bother pointing out when I catch them doing it. If winning means that much to them, I feel sorry for them. Our guys are out there to have a good time and enjoy being together ... and we do!"

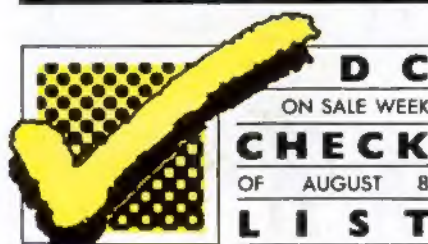


Several weeks ago, I felt impelled to join a conversation I'd overheard between two seemingly intelligent young ladies. It seemed that the one that was doing the most talking absolutely forbade her children to read any comics; she said it was a waste of time. The other woman simply nodded her head in dumb assent. Unable to restrain myself any longer, I stepped between them and proceeded to enlighten them on the benefits of comic book reading.

I told them of how, while other mothers were wondering why Johnny couldn't read, comics led me to an 11.4 reading level in the sixth grade. I told them of how, while many of my peers were joining gangs and experimenting with drugs and alcohol, I was building science fair projects and assisting the school librarians. This I told them, was due to the interest in science and reading that comics instilled in me. I told them how comic books fired me with a love for drawing and painting, and how this helped me pass the entrance exam for the High School of Art and Design. I told them how the stories in these comics filled me with awe and wonder, and stirred my imagination to the point where I enrolled in several creative writing classes in high school and college. I told them of the many art awards I've won from schools, of the stories I've had published, of the artwork I've sold. I told them of how comics sparked my interest in fields like computer science, veterinary medicine, police science, history, and even cybernetics.

Then, as I finally left them, I looked back over my shoulder and spoke to them in my most solemn and wise manner: "Everyone and everything in life needs nourishment. Young minds thrive, not only on textbooks and homework, but on stimuli and adventure. Comic books can be a springboard for a young mind. Short travels into these amazing and fun worlds of fantasy, in the long run, can help prepare [young people] for the real world in which they'll spend the rest of their lives."

Arnaldo Lopez Jr.
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